

Paul hopeful Congress will pass education savings accounts *PASS A+ could come up for a House vote as early as the next week*

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WASHINGTON, DC - As the days count down to the end of this legislative year, Representative Ron Paul (R-Surfside, Texas), said he is hopeful Congress will "do the right thing" and take a step toward restoring the right of parents to control the education their child receives.

"I am in no way optimistic that Congress will suddenly come to its senses, follow the Constitution, and abolish the Department of Education and end the federal government's stranglehold on American academics," said Paul. "But there is a chance, even if just a slight one, that Congress will at least step in the right direction and pass legislation to give all parents a tool to better provide for their child's educational needs."

Paul has been leading the charge for the Parents and Students Savings Account Plus (PASS A+) Act. Recently, he organized nine of his colleagues in writing a joint letter of support for the measure to all the members of Congress. The congressmen joining him included: Frank Riggs of California, Charlie Norwood of Georgia, David McIntosh of Indiana, Bob Schaffer of Colorado, Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, Cass Ballenger of North Carolina, John E. Peterson of Pennsylvania, Mark Souder of Indiana, and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina.

PASS A+ is a measure which was originally brought forward by Senator Paul Coverdell of Georgia during the budget agreements talks, and Representative Paul was very supportive of the measure. Coverdell's measure was stripped from the budget package at the last minute over concerns that the president would veto the package.

PASS A+ was introduced by Rep. Paul and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich to do the same thing as the Coverdell Amendment. It will allow parents to contribute up to \$2,000 per year into Education Savings Accounts, with no interest being levied on the interest accrued on the account. From that fund, parents can pay for education-related expenses such as tuition, tutoring, home computers, and books, whether their child is in a public, private or home school setting.

In addition, Paul is the author and lead sponsor of HR1816, the Family Education Freedom Act, which allows parents to take up to \$3,000 per year per child in tax credits to pay for education and educational expenses.

"The federal government needs to get out of the way and let parents of all backgrounds be able to afford to provide the absolute best education possible for their children," said Paul. "Federal involvement in education is unconstitutional and is destroying our nation's academic prowess. The time has come for parents to be in charge of their children's education, not bureaucrats in Washington, DC."

Congress is slated to end legislative business for the year in early November. If PASS A+ does not pass by then, the House and Senate will have to take up the measure in 1998.

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